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## **Franklin County Businesses Operator Pleads Guilty to Misrepresentations and Theft**

**Columbus, Ohio** – Franklin County Judge John Bender accepted a guilty plea entered yesterday by Mary Hackney of Cook County, Illinois, formerly of Franklin County, in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, and found her guilty of one count of misrepresentation in the sale of securities and five counts of theft. Hackney could face a maximum of eight years in prison. The sentencing hearing is scheduled for November 15, 2017.

The indictment in this case includes criminal charges against Philip Curtis of Orange County, North Carolina, and Lovell Jones of Franklin County. A trial is scheduled to begin November 7, 2017, for Philip Curtis. A capias warrant for Lovell Jones is still outstanding.

The indictment stems from allegations that the defendants jointly operated Hackney Consulting Group, Inc., doing business as HCG and HCG-770, previously located at 1224 Fair Ave. in Columbus. In addition, Jones operated another corporation, 800 CSN, LLC, from 1755 Shanley Drive in Columbus. The indictment alleges that, through these businesses, the defendants solicited funds from six residents of Ohio, Kansas and North Carolina to invest with Hackney Consulting Group, Inc. and its affiliated companies. Instead of using the money for investment, the indictment alleges that the money was used for personal expenses. The indictment alleges conduct between September 2011 and February 2013.

The case is being prosecuted by the office of the Franklin County Prosecutor, Ron O'Brien, and presented by the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, Thomas Allen.

Before investing, the Division of Securities encourages potential investors to call the Division's Investor Protection Hotline at 877-683-7841 to ask:

- Has the security been properly registered with the Division of Securities?
- Is the brokerage firm and salesperson licensed to sell securities in Ohio?
- Have any enforcement actions been taken against them?

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